

CLAIMS

1. A utility knife comprising:

a housing; said housing having a forward portion, a rear portion, and a middle portion;

a cutting member; said cutting member attached to said forward portion;
said rear portion, including a grip for enabling a user to grasp the knife with a hand;

a pivot wheel; said pivot wheel attached to said middle portion; at least a part of said pivot wheel received inside said housing whereby the knife is stabilized during use.

2. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said housing includes first and second sides; each including a wheel track for receiving said pivot wheel.

3. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 1 further including an opening extending through said middle portion; said opening adapted to receive the index finger of the user.

4. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 3 wherein said wheel is in the shape of a ring having a rim; said rim adjacent to said opening.

5. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 4 further including a curved hub wall inside said housing and extending about said opening; said rim of said wheel adjacent to said hub wall and engaging at least a portion of said hub wall during use of said knife.

6. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said knife is adapted to cut a work piece; said rear portion including a protruding section which is not part of said grip; said protruding section adapted to protect the hand of the user which grasps the knife from contacting the work piece.
7. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 6 wherein said protruding section includes a skid plate.
8. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 1 further including a storage compartment in said housing; said storage compartment adapted to receive spare cutting members.
9. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said housing has first and second sides and a mechanism for securing said first side to said second side; a storage compartment in said housing; said storage compartment adapted to receive spare cutting members; a rotation mechanism for enabling said first and second sides to rotate relative to one another to a second position so that said storage compartment is accessible to the user; said storage compartment being covered by said first and second sides when said first and second sides are in a first position relative to one another.
10. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 9 wherein said rotation mechanism, including a stud attached to and projecting from said first side and a curved track in said second side; said stud received in said curved track; said stud enabled to move along said curved track.

11. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 9 including a lock/release mechanism; said lock/release mechanism enabling said first and second sides to be locked into said first position and released to be placed in said second position.

12. A utility knife as set forth in Claim 11 wherein said lock/release mechanism includes a push button release mechanism and a locking notch.